

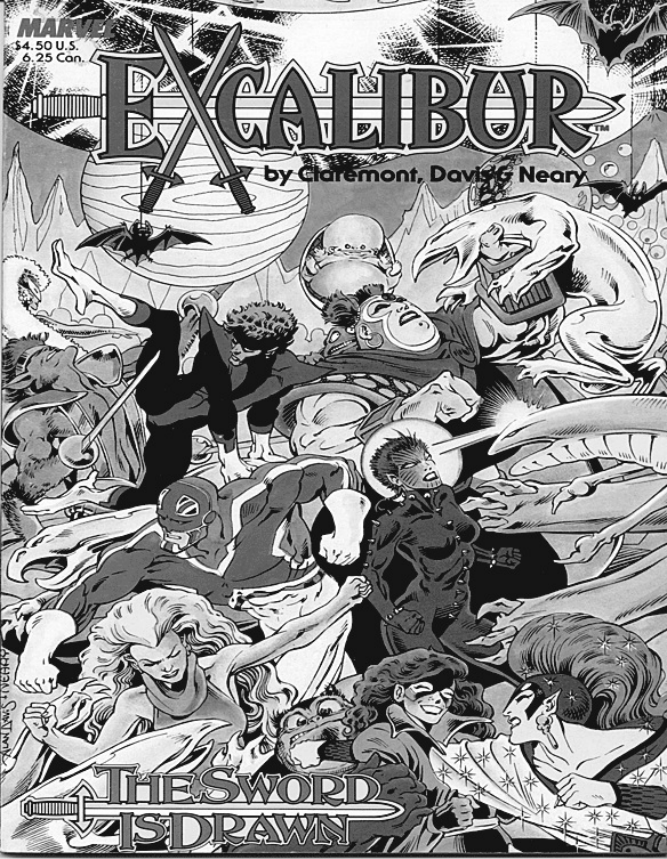
VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

MARVEL

\$4.50 U.S.
6.25 Can.

EXCALIBUR™



by Claremont, Davis & Neary

THE SWORD
IS DRAWN

KITTY
PRYDE

TOSS-TURN

FIDGET TO AND FRO

TICK-TOCK, THE CLOCK--
TIME DRAGS, SLOVER BY
THE MINUTE, THROUGH
A NIGHT THAT LASTS
FOREVER.

ALL SHE WANTS IS SLEEP.

THE
ONCE
AND
FUTURE
KING

HEPBURN

AIL

NIKOV

SO MUCH-- TOO
MUCH-- TO ASK,
A SMALL SLICE
OF OBLIVION?

TO TAKE
THE HURT
AWAY.

BUT BECAUSE
SHE HURTS--

--THOUGHTS RACING, IMAGES
REPLAYING, ETCHING THEM-
SELVES (THOSE FINAL, AWFUL
MOMENTS, HOW SHE HATES
THEM) INTO HER MIND'S-EYE--

--SHE CAN'T.

SHE'D CRY.

IF SHE
HAD ANY
TEARS
LEFT.



STAN LEE
PRESENTS

EXCAV

...TO WONDER
IF SHE'S LOST
HER MIND.

TIME IS
MONEY,
PEOPLE!

X-DIRECTOR

UNDERSTUDY





LIBUR

LET'S GET
THAT SET
RIGGED AND
READY!

I CAN'T
KEEP MY
ACTORS
WAITING
FOREVER!!

OR PERHAPS, MIRACU-
LOUSLY, FOUND THE
ANSWER TO HER MOST
HEARTFELT PRAYERS.



MOJO'S
NEW
WORLD
PIX





AND WAKING
DOESN'T ALWAYS
MAKE THINGS
BETTER.

RACHEL--? I DON'T
UNDER-
STAND--

--THIS HAS
TO BE A
DREAM--
ONLY IT
FEELS SO
REAL.

AND THE X-MEN-- MORE PUPPETS
THAN PEOPLE-- TRAVESTIES OF
THE HEROES I REMEMBER.

WHEN THE
REALITY NO
LONGER
EXISTS...

--EXPLOITERS
CAN TAKE
THE LEGEND...

--AND MAKE IT
WHATEVER THEY
WANT, GOOD OR BAD.

RACHEL! YOU'RE NOT IN THIS
PRODUCTION!

YOU HAD YOUR
CHANCE AT STARDOM.
BABY PHOENIX,
AND BLEW IT!

WHEN YOUR
TEAMMATES
NEEDED
YOU MOST...

--YOU
RAN
OUT ON
THEM!

MY
MISTAKE--

--MY
SHAME--

--BUT
NOW I'VE
A CHANCE--

--TO MAKE
AMENDS.

NOBODY LEAVES WITHOUT
MY PERMISSION.

YOU CAN'T
HOLD ME!

CARE TO BET YOUR
LIFE ON
THAT?

NOT
SO FAST,
YOUNG
LADY.

STOP
IT!

PROFESSOR--
X-MEN--

--YOU'RE
TEARING
HER
APART!!

SHE'S OUR
FRIEND!

IF SHE
STAYS OR
GOES, IT
SHOULD BE
BY HER FREE
CHOICE!

IT'S WRONG
TO FORCE
HER!

AND I
WON'T LET
YOU--!

IF I CAN REACH
RACHEL-- TOUCH HER--

MY POWER
SHOULD PHASE
HER THROUGH
HER CHAINS--!

BLESS
YOU,
KITTY!

BE
SEEING
YOU--

MAYBE
SOONER
THAN YOU
THINK!



THAT, YOUNG LADY,
WAS VERY NAUGHTY!

SURE SEEMED
LIKE A GREAT
IDEA--

AT
THE
TIME.

AND I'M
SURE YOU
KNOW--

WHAT
HAPPENS
TO NAUGHTY
LITTLE
GIRLS.



WARWOLVES!

MANIFEST
YOURSELVES--

--AND TEACH THE
BRAT A LESSON!

NO!

THE
WALL--!

I'M SOLID AGAIN--
I CAN'T PHASE--

--CAN'T
ESCAPE--

--X-MEN--

--ALL
MONSTERS--

--NO
KEEP AWAY
DON'T
PLEASE
NO!







THE CELTIC SEA,
OFF THE WEST
COAST OF ENGLAND.

SHE'D BEEN SWIMMING
ALONE, WHEN THE POD
POPPED UP AND
ASKED HER TO PLAY.

THE DOLPHINS' NATURAL
EXUBERANCE WAS TOO
INFECTIOUS...

TO BE
DENIED.

SHE KNEW
NEXT TO
NOTHING OF
THE SEA.

SO THEY DELIGHTED
IN TEACHING HER ITS
WONDERS AND MYSTERIES.

SHE WAS HAVING
SO MUCH FUN...

SHE LOST
ALL TRACK
OF TIME.

UNTIL

A BIRD
OF
FIRE...

HERALDING
THE SUNRISE?

HOW
BEAUTI-
FUL!

BUT HAVE
I BEEN AWAY
SO LONG?

FAREWELL,
FINFRIENDS!

SEE YOU
AGAIN SOON,
I HOPE!
UNTIL THEN,
STAY WELL!!

I KNOW
BRIAN
WILL BE
WORRIED.

PLEASE
LET HIM
NOT BE
ANGRY.

HER NAME IS
MEGGAN.

AND SHE IS
AS MUCH A
CREATURE OF
THE EARTH...

...AS OF MAN.

IN OLDEN DAYS,
SHE'D BE CALLED
ONE OF THE
FAERY FOLK.







I'M
SORRY,
BRIAN?

I DIDN'T
MEAN TO
MAKE YOU
CROSS?

I'M ALWAYS
SAYING THE
WRONG THING,
AND DOING
WORSE.

BUT IT ISN'T
TRUE WHAT YOU
SAID... I DO CARE,
I DO UNDER-
STAND!

BETSY WAS GENTLE AND KIND
TO ME. SHE WAS YOUR
SISTER, BUT MY FRIEND.

I MISS
HER, TOO!

MAYBE,
THOUGH, IT'S
YOU WHO
DON'T CARE
ANYMORE.

ABOUT
ME.

HAVE I BEEN FOOLING
MYSELF ALL THESE MONTHS,
THINKING YOU LOVED ME?

I COULDN'T
BEAR THAT HURT,
I'D RATHER
BE DEAD.

STOP IT,
SILLY
GIRL!

HE'S LASHING
OUT BECAUSE
HE'S IN PAIN,
SAME AS YOU
USED TO BE

HE GOT YOU PAST
THAT AWFUL TIME.

...NOW IT'S YOUR TURN
TO RETURN THE FAVOR.

HOPE THIS
NOTE LOOKS
RIGHT.

SO
BLESSED
HARD TO
PUT SPEAKY-
WORDS ON
PAPER.

BUT I
CAN'T
FACE
HIM...

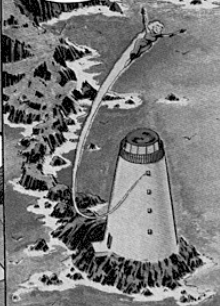
...NOT WHILE
HE'S IN SUCH
A STATE...

...NOT 'TIL
I KNOW
WHAT
TO DO.

CAN'T
MANAGE
ON MY
OWN,
EITHER.



ONLY ONE
PLACE TO
GO FOR THE
PROPER
ADVICE







A FULL-BORE COMBAT EXERCISE--
WITH THE SAFETY INTERLOCKS
DISCONNECTED--

--SO SOON
AFTER YOUR
RELEASE
FROM MOIRA'S
HOSPITAL--

--ARE YOU
CRAZY?!

LUCKY FOR
YOU THE
BACK-UP
ALARMS...

--SOUNDED IN THE HOUSE
THE MINUTE YOU STARTED--

I HAD TO
LEARN, KITTY,
IF I HAD
LOST MY
EDGE.

DOESN'T IT MATTER IF,
IN THE PROCESS, YOU
LOSE YOUR LIFE?!

WHAT GIVES, KURT--
YOU FEEL LEFT OUT
BECAUSE THE REST OF
THE X-MEN GOT
KILLED AND WE
DIDN'T?

YOU FIGURE
ON THIS BEING
THE PERFECT
WAY TO CATCH
UP TO 'EM??

YOU HAVE
NO RIGHT
TO SAY SUCH
THINGS!

YOU
HAVEN'T
THE RIGHT
TO GIVE
ME A
CAUSE!

JA, I KNOW.
I'M SORRY.

WHEN I AWOKED
FROM MY COMA,
I WAS SO... HAPPY
TO BE ALIVE. DEAR
KATZCHEN, YOU
CANNOT
IMAGINE.

ALL I REMEMBERED WAS
THE PAIN OF BEING WOUNDED
AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW,
I WAS HERE IN MOIRA MAC-
TAGGART'S MUTANT RESEARCH
FACILITY, AND IT WAS
MONTHS LATER.

AND I THOUGHT,
I'VE HAD A TASTE OF
DEATH--BUT I SURVIVED.
I BEAT THE REAPER!

MY TIME
WILL COME--
BUT NOT
TODAY!

I WANTED TO SHARE THAT
JOY WITH THOSE I LOVED
BEST-- YOU AND PETER AND
LOGAN AND ORORO, WITH
ALL THE X-MEN--

--ONLY I
COULDN'T,
BECAUSE
THEY WERE
DEAD.

I KNOW
HOW YOU
FEEL,
KURT.

AND THEN,
LAST NIGHT...

...I HAD
THIS
DREAM.

SAY
WHAT?!



I'VE NEVER HAD THE LIKE.

WHEN IT WAS DONE, I FELT ASHAMED--ALMOST PHYSICALLY ILL.

I WAS IN A MOVIE STUDIO, WITH TWISTED, DECADENT VERSIONS OF THE X-MEN AS THE CAST, AND HERE PROFESSOR XAVIER OUR DIRECTOR.

AND RACHEL WAS THERE, TOO--

--SOME KIND OF PRISONER--

--AND YOU HELPED HER ESCAPE?

"JAH! ONLY I WAS LEFT BEHIND..."

"TO BEHOLD THE X-MEN'S TRANSFORMATION INTO MONSTERS."

THE PROF CALLED 'EM **WARWOLVES**.

YOU ALSO, THEN!

PRETTY WEIRD, huh?

IF WE BOTH HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE, MAYBE IT WASN'T REALLY A DREAM.



RAY'S A TELEPATH. MAYBE SHE WAS TRYING TO SEND US A MESSAGE?

QUESTION IS, WHY NOW, AFTER STAYING OUT OF TOUCH FOR SO LONG?

AND WHAT'S IT ALL MEAN?

THAT ISN'T FUNNY.

SHOULDN'T WE DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT?



THE PAIR OF US, CRIPPLED AS WE ARE??

JUST 'CAUSE WE'VE BEEN HURT...



...DOESN'T MEAN WE STOP BEING X-MEN.

CRUMBS, THE DOOR!

DUCK OUTTA SIGHT, KURT...

...WHILE I SEE...



...WHO IS IT?



SALUTATIONS,
SMALL AND
YOUTHFUL
SENTIENTS!

Snee. Two
paraforms
present,
mother.

None
others close
enough to
interfere.

I GROW
WEARY OF
ENDLESSLY
REPEATING
MYSELF,
LIZARD

DON'T
CALL ME
MOTHER.

Yes,
mother.

Sigh...
IF YOU
WEREN'T SO
INFERNALLY
USEFUL--!

I AM GATE-
CRASHER.

WOULD YOU PLEASE
INFORM THE MASTER
OR MISTRESS OF THIS
DOMICLE OF MY
PRESENCE?

WOULD
YOU
MIND...

TAKING
YOUR HAND
OUTTA MY
FACE?

YOU TERRESTRIAL PARAFORMS
COME IN SUCH STIMULATINGLY
SPIRITED VARIETY.

IT NEVER
FAILS TO
AMAZE.

LOOK-- GATE-
CRASHER-- I HATE
TO DISAPPOINT
YOU...

... BUT
DR. MACTAGGART--
THIS IS HER
HOUSE AND HER
ISLAND--

SHE'S AWAY
RIGHT
NOW.

IF YOU'D
CARE TO
LEAVE A
NUMBER OR
ADDRESS...



REGRETTABLY,
DEAR GIRL,
TIME OPPRESSES
AND DELAYS
CANNOT BE
COUNTEANANCED

Snee--
mother--
intruder--

--imminently
arriving!



HULLO, KITTY?

WHO--?!

MEGGAN, CAPTAIN BRITAIN'S GIRL-FRIEND.

SHE CERTAINLY KNOWS HOW TO MAKE AN ENTRANCE.

BY THE WAY, KATZCHEN--

--WHO'S CAPTAIN BRITAIN?



YOU-- THE HIPPOPOTAMUS!

YOU GUYS KNOW EACH OTHER? SPECTACULAR!

SALUTATIONS, SWANLING. YOU APPEAR AS FORMIDABLY LOVELY AS EVER.



WHATEVER YOU'RE AFTER, YOU'D BETTER LEAVE BRIAN ALONE!

REST ASSURED, I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO INTEREST IN YOUR DEAR CAPTAIN.

SO WHY ARE YOU HERE?

I NEED TO TALK WITH YOU, KITTY. IT'S IMPORTANT.



ACTUALLY, DEARLING, I BELIEVE SHE WAS ADDRESSING...

...ME.

THIS PSYCHECOM CRYSTAL...

...SHOULD MAKE EVERYTHING PLAIN AS STARLIGHT.



I AM OPAL LUNA SATURNINE

OMNIVERSAL MAJESTRIA

RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF ORDER AND REALITY IN THIS SECTOR OF CREATION.

UnGLAUBlich!

THE WITCH--I NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHAT BRIAN SAW IN HER.



BOY, I CAN...

...DAHN IT.





SADLY MISPLACED.

WHERE'D THIS CROWD COME FROM?

I--snee--brought them.

Teleporter, that's me!

HUSH, YOU BOASTFUL REPTILE.

THE TECHNET, BY NATURE, ABHORS VIOLENCE.

BUT, IF PROVOKED, WE'LL BE HAPPY TO INDULGE...

...IN WHATEVER LEVEL OF PHYSICAL CONFRONTATION YOU DESIRE.



RACHEL SUMMERS.

FALLING

CAST OUT

FLEEING

FROM HEAVEN

HADES

NEVER

SURE WHICH

ALL THE SAME

TO HER...

... SCREAMING
CHEERING
CRYING...

... WITH JOY
AND TERROR
COMBINED...

... AS ALL THE
COMPONENT ELEMENTS
OF HER BEING...

... ARE
SHATTERED...

... SPREAD BEYOND
REALITY, BEYOND
CONCEPTION...

... TO THE FARTHEST
REACHES OF CREATION...

... WHERE SPACE
HAS NO MEANING,
AND TIME
EVEN LESS.

FOR THAT
INFINITE MOMENT,
SHE IS ALL.

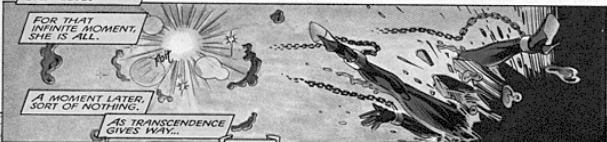
A MOMENT LATER,
SORT OF NOTHING.

AS TRANSCENDENCE
GIVES WAY...

... TO
REALITY.

Oh!!!

WHAT'S ALL
THIS THEN,
eh??









BUT FOLLOWING AND CATCHING ARE --

--uh-oh...
THEY'RE IMMUNE TO MY TELEKINESIS!

I CAN'T GET A FIRM GRIP ON THEM!



...TO DO THE JOB FOR ME.

I MAY JUST BE JUST BE A "BABY" PHOENIX...

...BUT THAT MAKES ME A MORE WORTHY MATCH FOR THE LIKES OF YOU!



AND YOU, WARWOLF...

...HAVEN'T THE SLIGHTEST NOTION...

...OF WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST!

YOUR MASTER USED THESE CHAINS TO BIND ME.

ONLY FAIR THEY SERVE THE SAME PURPOSE FOR YOU!

DON'T BOTHER STRUGGLING.

YOU WON'T HAVE TIME.

WALL...
HOLE!

A WAY OUT!!

GREAT!

MASQUERADE
FANCY DRESS
BENEFIT
TODAY

BUT WHAT'S THE POINT OF RUNNING...

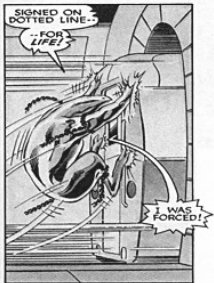
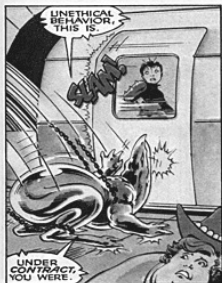
...IF THIS IS JUST A SOUND-STAGE...

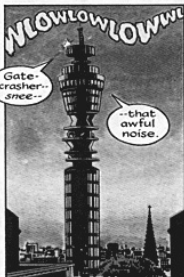
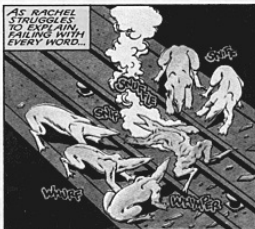
...OF MOJO'S...

STUDIO???









MEANWHILE...

...BACK AT A CERTAIN LIGHTHOUSE...

WHAT A MESS!

AND THE STENCH IS WORSE!

Ach... EVEN WOLVERINE'S BINGES WERE NEVER AS BAD AS THIS.

WHAT YOU NEED, HERR KAPITAN...

...IS A BATH!

AND IF PERCHANCE...

...YOU SHOULD FAIL TO RESURFACE...

...WELL, BASED ON WHAT I'VE JUST SEEN...

NO GREAT LOSS.

HOWEVER...

BY ALL THE SAINTED DEVILS--

--SOMEONE TRIED TO KILL ME!

HARDLY. YOU'RE DOING WELL ENOUGH ON THAT SCORE BY YOURSELF.

NIGHT-CRAWLER!

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS??!

SIMPLE. I NEED YOU AWAKE AND SOBER, AND I'M NOT IN A MOOD TO BE POLITE ABOUT IT.

THAT'S THE EXPLANATION.

IF YOU WISH AN APOLOGY, HERR BRADDOCK...

...EARN IT?

OVER COFFEE, NIGHTCRAWLER
RELATES THE DAY'S EVENTS...



BY THE TIME I RETURNED TO
THE HOUSE-- AFTER TELEPORTING
AWAY-- GATECRASHER WAS LONG
GONE.

WITH
BOTH KITTY
AND YOUR
FRAULEIN
MEGGAN

I DUG
UP OUR
FILE ON
YOU...



...AND
SPENT
THE
REST
OF TODAY
GETTING
HERE.

I CANNOT
TAKE ON THE
TECHNET
ALONE.
I NEED
YOUR
HELP.

QUITE
RIGHT. VERY
SENSIBLE.
SET ON IT
DIRECTLY.



TO BE HONEST,
THOUGH, I'M
WONDERING
IF I MADE A
MISTAKE.

WHAT IS
WRONG WITH
YOU, MAN?!

FRIENDS
ARE IN
DANGER--



--AMONG THEM, THE
GIRL YOU SUPPOSEDLY
LOVE-- DOESN'T
THAT MATTER...

--DON'T
YOU
CARE?!

'COURSE
I DO.

IT'S
JUST--

--WHAT'S
THE
POINT?



SAVE THEM NOW TO WATCH
THEM SACRIFICE THEM-
SELVES LATER.

WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE
HEROES-- BUT WE NEVER
REALLY MAKE THINGS
BETTER. WE HAVE
NO LASTING EFFECT
--ON PEOPLE OR
THE WORLD.

THE DEVIL
YOU SAY!

WHEN I SAY
I'M A "HERO," I
MEAN IT IN JEST.
I HAVEN'T THE
RIGHT TO TRULY
CALL MYSELF
ONE. AND YOU
HAVE EVEN
LESS.



ALL I AM IS A MAN, TRYING TO LIVE LIFE AS BEST HE
KNOWS HOW, AND BE TRUE TO WHAT HE WAS TAUGHT.

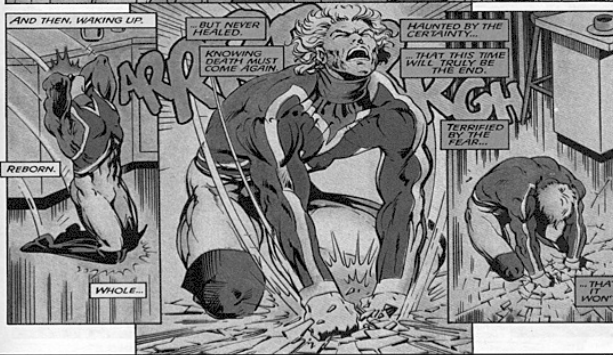
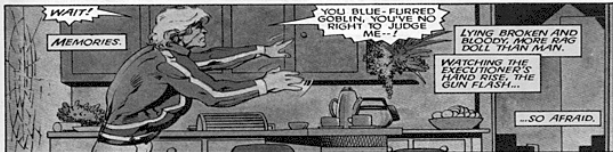
THOSE BELIEFS GOT
MY SISTER KILLED!

VA-- AND MY
DEAREST FRIENDS
WITH HER! MY
"FAMILY!"

MEIN GOTT-- SOME-
TIMES, ALL I YEARN FOR,
MORE THAN ANYTHING,
IS TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN
THE CHANCE, THE PRIVI-
LEGE, OF STANDING WITH
THE X-MEN AND SHARING
THEIR FATE!

IT ISN'T FAIR
THEY'RE DEAD.
IT'S FAR WORSE
THAT I REMAIN
ALIVE TO GRIEVE
FOR THEM, BECAUSE
IT'S MORE PAIN
THAN I CAN
ENDURE!!

BUT I AM
ALIVE,
BRADDOCK!





SCROUNGED
SOME
CLOTHES TO
CALL MY OWN.

QUESTION
IS DO I
HAVE A PLACE
TO GO WITH
THEM?

I'M THE
PRODIGAL
GIRL...



...WHO RAN OUT
ON THE X-MEN
WHEN THEY
NEEDED HER
MOST.

Excalibur

I
BETRAYED
THEIR
TRUST.

SERVE ME
RIGHT IF
THEY SLAM
THE DOOR IN
MY FACE.



NO SENSE
MOPING LOST
AND LONELY,
SOB-SORRY
FOR MYSELF.

THE X-MEN
ARE MY
FAMILY.

I'VE NOWHERE
ELSE TO
GO.



YOU'VE RUN
US QUITE A
RACE, NAUGHTY
STARCHILD.

BUT IT'S
OVER.

BODYBAG,
DO THE
HONORS!



NEURAL TOXIN--
INSTANTANEOUSLY
INHIBITS THE
SYNAPSES, SO
NOTHING VOLUN-
TARY WORKS.

BREATHING'S OKAY,
HEARTBEAT, TOO-- ALL
THE AUTONOMIC STUFF--
BUT THE MIND GOES
FUGUE-- BLANK...



...THE BODY REDUCED TO A
SACK OF MEAT, TO BE FOLDED
ANY WHICH WAY, NO PROBLEM,
GOES DOWN SMOOTH AND
EASY.



WE CAN
DISPENSE
WITH THE
OTHER
TWO.
AND,
NO, THAT
DOES NOT
MEAN
DINNER.



Mother--217





EXCUSE
ME,
SENTIENTS--

BLIX!

URRR!!

--BUT YOU ARE
INTERFERING...

...WITH DULY
AUTHORIZED
REPRESENTA-
TIVES--



--oh,
BOTHER!

I NEVER
SHOULD HAVE
KEPT FERRO
ON THE PAYROLL...

...AFTER
HIS
WARRANTY
EXPIRED!



SHAK!

STUPID
BEAST--

--HAVE
YOU THE
SLIGHTEST
NOTION ...

HOW
INFERNALLY
DIFFICULT
IT IS...

YAAIE--
OWWW!!



--TO FIND
GOOD
HELP?!

STOMP!









BEASTIES--
SO SLEEK AND
SHINY--

--LOVE
THE WAY
LIGHT
SPLASHES
ON SILVER
SKIN--

--THEY DON'T
APPROVE, OUR
TAKING PHOENIX.



NAUGHTY, NAUGHTY--
SHE'S OUR PRIZE!

AS YOU
BECOME
MINE!

BUT TOO
BIG AND
WRIGGLY
YOU ARE.



SO CHINA DOLL
WILL SHRINK YOU
--TO A
PRETTIER
SIZE.

YIP TI!

WEAR YOU,
SIL I.
AS A
GLITTER-
BANGLE!



FEEL SO
SLIFY,
INSIDE
AND
OUT.

POOR HEAD
ACHES--
BRIAN!

IN
TROUBLE!!



I'LL HELP
YOU, MY
LOVE!!

THIS IS
WAXWORKS.

THE
MEREST
TOUCH...



--AND THE BODY LOSES
ALL FIRMNESS.

GAMH!!



MEGGANI!

SO DECENT
A MAN.

SO EASILY--
--FATELY--
DISTRACTED...

--BY CONCERN
FOR THOSE HE
CARES ABOUT.

A MOMENTARY
THING...

THAT
SCATTERBRAIN
TURNS INTO
AN ETERNITY...



GKIK!

--AS HER
CARRESS FIRES
ALL HIS NEURAL
SYNAPSES
AT ONCE--







ANOTHER
NIGHT...

(AFTER
THE MESS
IN LONDON
HAS BEEN
TIDIED UP...

...AND
EXPLANATIONS
MADE TO THE
APPROPRIATE
AUTHORITIES)...

ATOP
THE SCOTS
HIGHLANDS.

SO
PROFESSOR
XAVIER SPENDS
WEEKS
PROGRAMMING
THE DANGER
ROOM FOR
MY TRIAL
SESSION...

...AND I WALK
THROUGH IT
UNTOUCHED...

...WITH
MY EYES
CLOSED!

WOLVERINE
CHALLENGED
ME...

...TO WALK
DOWN THE
MAIN STREET
OF SALEM
CENTER...

...UNDISGUISED
IN MY NATURAL
SHAPE.





BUT THAT
DIDN'T
MATTER.

BECAUSE THE CLUTTER
DIDN'T AFFECT MY
EMOTIONAL REALITIES--
PERHAPS, IN TURN,
BECAUSE THE PHOENIX BY
NATURE RELATES,
RESPONDS BETTER TO
FEELINGS THAN
RATIONALITY.

I KNOW
WHO I
AM--

--WHO I
CARE FOR,
WHO I DON'T--
THAT'S WHAT
MATTERS.

THE REST
I CAN TAKE
OR LEAVE.

SPEAKING
OF
LEAVING...



IT'S AWFULLY LATE.
I THINK TO
FOLLOW EVERYBODY
ELSE'S EXAMPLE...

AND
RETURN
HOME TO
BED.

IS
THAT
IT?!



PACK UP,
CALL THINGS
QUITS...

AND
GO OUR
SEPARATE
WAYS?!!

WE
ACCOMPLISHED
WHAT WE SET
OUT TO DO.

NOW, WHILE
I DEAL
WITH THE
WARWOLVES...



THE REST OF YOU
CAN GO ON WITH
YOUR LIVES.

WHAT ABOUT
THOSE LIVES--

--HOW
ARE WE
SUPPOSED
TO LIVE
THEM?!

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND,
RACHEL, WHAT
DO YOU MEAN?!



THE DREAM,
CAPTAIN-- CHARLES
XAVIER'S DREAM--
OF A WORLD WHERE
ALL EARTH'S
CHILDREN, MUTANT
AND OTHERWISE,
LIVE TOGETHER
IN PEACE AND
HARMONY!

WHERE PEOPLE ARE
JUDGED FOR WHO THEY
ARE-- NOT WHAT THEY
LOOK LIKE OR HOW
THEY'RE BORN.



THAT'S
WHY HE
CREATED
THE X-MEN,
TO EXEMPLIFY
THAT
DREAM.

ARE YOU SAYING,
SIMPLY BECAUSE
THE X-MEN ARE
DEAD...

WE'RE
SUPPOSED
TO GIVE
IT UP?!



THE DREAM WE HAD, NIGHT-CRAWLER-- REMEMBER, BACK BEFORE THIS CRAZY CAPER BEGAN-- IN IT, RACHEL SAID TO ME!

"--WHEN THE REALITY NO LONGER EXISTS, EXPLOITERS CAN TAKE THE LEGEND..."

"--AND MAKE IT WHATEVER THEY WANT..."

"...GOOD OR BAD..."



ARE YOU SUGGESTING WE TAKE THE X-MEN'S PLACE?

NOBODY CAN DO THAT.

BUT KING ARTHUR HAD A DREAM, TOO.

OF A WORLD WHERE MIGHT SERVED RIGHT, INSTEAD OF SURVIVING IT.

HIS KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE WERE THE AGENTS OF THAT DREAM...



AND HIS SWORD, EXCALIBUR, THE SYMBOL OF IT.

HE DIED, THE TABLE WAS DESTROYED, HIS KNIGHTS MOSTLY SLAIN--YET THE DREAM SURVIVED.

THEY BECAME LEGEND...



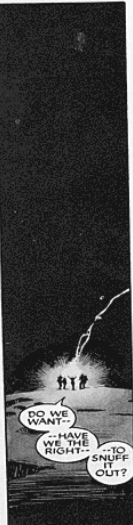
--AND THE SWORD, THE MEANS OF KEEPING THE LEGEND ALIVE AND VITAL THROUGH THE AGES.



THE X-MEN THOUGHT ENOUGH OF PROFESSOR XAVIER'S DREAM-- TO OFFER UP THEIR LIVES. IS IT SO MUCH TO ASK THAT WE FIGHT TO PRESERVE IT?

THE SWORD, EXCALIBUR, REPRESENTED HOPE.

IT WAS LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS OF FEAR AND IGNORANCE AND HATE.



DO WE WANT--

--HAVE WE THE RIGHT--

--TO SNUFF IT OUT?



I'VE
RUN MY
WHOLE
LIFE.

I CAN'T
REMEMBER A
TIME WHEN I
WASN'T
AFRAID.

I LET PEOPLE
TELL ME WHAT
TO DO -- IT'S
EASIER THAT
WAY, Y'KNOW...

SAVES YOU FROM
HAVING TO TAKE
RESPONSIBILITY
FOR ANYTHING.

WELL, I'M
TIRED OF
RUNNING.

I WANT
TO TAKE A
STAND.

BECAUSE IF I DON'T,
THEN MAYBE I BETTER
LET THE WARWOLVES
CARRY ME BACK...

...TO THE
MAKE-BELIEVE
SLAVEWORLD...



...WHERE
I BELONG.

A WORLD OF ILLUSION AND
ARTIFICE, WHERE WHATEVER
SELLS BEST GETS THE GLORY...

...WHETHER
IT'S TRUTH
OR LIES.



MY-
SELF, I
STAND
FOR
TRUTH.

AND
STAND
BY
YOU.

RACHEL'S LIFE
SOUNDS MUCH
LIKE MINE,
BRIAN.

I WON'T
HAVE ANYONE
ELSE ENDURE
SUCH
HORROR.



I LIKE
THIS DREAM.

IT'S WORTH
FIGHTING
FOR.

HOW
ABOUT
YOU?



WHAT
THE
HECK!

COUNT
ME IN--

--WITH
ALL MY
HEART!

AND SO-- WITH LAUGHTER
AND TRANSCENDENT JOY--
THE DREAM IS RECONSECATED...

...AND
EXCALIBUR...

ONCE MORE
REDRAWN.

...THAT MOST ANCIENT
AND NOBLE BLADE...

The
BEGINNING!

